STIC Search Report
EIC 2100

STIC Database Tracking Number: 105498

TO: Gwen Liang **Location:** **Art Unit : 2172** **Wednesday, October 08, 2003** **Case Serial Number: 09755815**	**From: Geoffrey St. Leger** **Location: EIC 2100** **PK2-4B30** **Phone: 308-7800** **geoffrey.stleger@uspto.gov**

Search Notes

Dear Examiner Liang,

Attached please find the results of your search request for application 09755815. I searched Dialog's foreign patent files, product announcement files and general files; along with the Internet.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Regards,

Geoffrey St. Leger
4B30/308-7800

STIC Search Results Feedback Form

EIC 2100

Questions about the scope or the results of the search? Contact ***the EIC searcher or contact*:**

Anne Hendrickson, EIC 2100 Team Leader
308-7831, CPK2-4B40

Voluntary Results Feedback Form

- *I am an examiner in Workgroup:* ☐ *Example: 3730*
- *Relevant prior art **found**, search results used as follows:*
  - ☐ 102 rejection
  - ☐ 103 rejection
  - ☐ Cited as being of interest.
  - ☐ Helped examiner better understand the invention.
  - ☐ Helped examiner better understand the state of the art in their technology.

Types of relevant prior art found:

- ☐ Foreign Patent(s)
- ☐ Non-Patent Literature
  (journal articles, conference proceedings, new product announcements etc.)

- *Relevant prior art **not found:***
  - ☐ Results verified the lack of relevant prior art (helped determine patentability).
  - ☐ Results were not useful in determining patentability or understanding the invention.

Comments:

Drop off or s nd completed forms to STIC/EIC2100 CPK2-4B40

Search and Information Resources Administration

no "time & location" both provided for one activity

FOLLOWtheRABBIT!

The Vacation Advisor

Preview Version

Friday, December 01, 2000

Search By Destination

Member Login

Buzz

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LOOKING FOR A GETAWAY SUGGESTION?

Welcome to the Web's first travel advisor! We have researched hundreds of destinations for you. Answer a few simple questions, and we'll suggest vacation spots that match your preferences.

Activities

What do you enjoy? Check all that apply.

- ☐ "Relaxing" includes Sitting in Cafés, Strolling in Parks, Enjoying Spa Treatments, Watching Sports and Lying on a Beach.
- ☐ "Sights & Culture" includes Natural Wonders, Architecture & History, Tourist Attractions, Museums, Guided Tours, Excursions,
- ☐ "Nightlife" includes Theater, Cinema, Classical Music, Contemporary Music, Dance Clubs and Gambling.
- ☐ Find places with great shopping.
- ☐ Find a destination with great restaurants.
- ☐ "Leisure Activities" includes Golf, Tennis, Jogging or Rollerblading, Road biking, Horseback Riding, Fishing, Canoeing, Hunting
- ☐ Theme Parks, Zoos and Aquariums
- ☐ "Water Sports" includes Surfing, Windsurfing, Scuba Diving, Jet Skiing, Swimming in a Lake or Ocean and Snorkeling.
- ☐ "Winter Sports" includes Downhill Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, Snowmobiling and Ice Climbing.
- ☐ "Adventure Sports" includes Hiking, Mountain Biking, Rock Climbing, Whitewater Rafting, Paragliding and Bungee Jumping

Who's Going?

Who will be going on this trip?

Just me

Search Tips

1. There are five boxes on this page, all geared to finding the vacation destination best suited for you. The top four boxes need to be filled in, so we have a starting point for our

search. The fifth and bottom box, however, is optional; it allows you to add more specifics to the search.

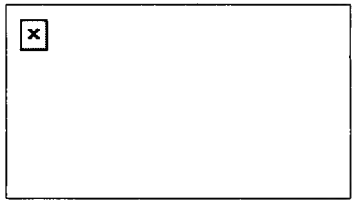
2. To find out the activities contained in each category, simply move your mouse cursor over each of the lines in the "Activities Box".

3. After this page, a second screen of questions will appear, designed to specify your activities and preferences even more. These are all optional, but checking them will help us refine the destination search.

Optional Criteria

If you wish, you can refine your search further. Would you like to:

- ☐ Specify a Region
- ☐ Set a Budget
- ☐ Choose Weather Conditions
- ☐ Avoid Crowded Destinations
- ☐ Select a Specific Environment
- ☐ Indicate if you prefer to drive or fly
- ☐ Avoid Jet Lag
- ☐ Benefit from Traveler Support
- ☐ Be Assured of Good Health & Safety Conditions
- ☐ Improve a Particular Foreign Language



This is our preview version. Help us improve it! Send your comments to comments@followtherabbit.com

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The Matching Engine

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FOLLOW the RABBIT!

The Vacation Advisor

SENSITIVITY RULES

Why Do we need a Departure Date?

Each of our recommendations is ***time dependent***. **Activities** in the various destinations are ranked based on time of year. In addition, **weather conditions**, **hotel rates** and **airfares** may vary dramatically throughout the year.

In order to make accurate recommendations, we have compiled a unique database of historical domestic and international ***airfares*** from a number of sources. This data allows us to estimate-with a reasonable degree of certainty-the average airfare for flights from one city to another at a specific time of the year. We have also added a price variation function that allows us to adjust this average airfare to a specific departure date. Abnormal price variations due to "price war" situations or special events, however, have not been factored in into our model.

In addition to our airfare database, we have also gathered a significant amount of average ***hotel rate information*** for each destination, depending on the category of hotel and the season.

And finally, we have also built a database of weather conditions gathered from various private and public sources. Among the variables we track are average temperature, average amount of sunshine, average humidity and average level of wind. In most cases, these are taken from thirty years of historical data.

We use statistical tools to estimate average weather conditions for each week of the year in a specific destination, so we can try to match you with a destination that offers the climate you prefer at the time of year you are traveling. Obviously, long-term weather forecasts always involve some degree of uncertainty, and actual weather conditions may depart significantly from the average.

Why do we need a Departure City?

All of our suggestions are also ***distance dependent***. For example, if you tell us you only have a short weekend to get away, we will take into account whether you are leaving from the West Coast or from New York. Our database includes information about the distances from destinations to various departure cities, as well as flying and driving times. We want you to enjoy your vacation time, not be sitting on plane for half your trip.

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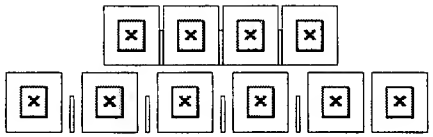

THE MATCHING ENGINE

Follow The Rabbit! uses a proprietary, cutting-edge filtering technology based on four years of research conducted at the Nagoya Institute of Technology in Japan. Our technology-**The Matching Engine**-is a unique combination of five levels of filtering: **content-based** filtering, **event-based** filtering, **collaborative** filtering, **context-based** filtering and **location-based** filtering, for wireless applications. These five levels help prevent information overload; it allows us to show Web users only information they consider relevant.

The Matching Engine allows us to understand specific user preferences, and to provide recommendations that closely match those preferences. Best of all, the Matching Engine explains *why* it recommends one thing over another, so users can make better informed, and therefore more confident, decisions.

The Matching Engine is a technology product from TripleHop, Inc., a New York-based Web infrastructure and technology company that provides both packaged and custom-made recommender systems to Internet companies. In addition to our own Follow The Rabbit! site, we also work with other Web sites to provide similar recommendation features that help their users feel confident about the many important purchases they make online. Please contact us for **partnership opportunities**.

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http://web.archive.org/web/20000621142459/www.followtherabbit.com/thematchingengine.asp 10/8/03

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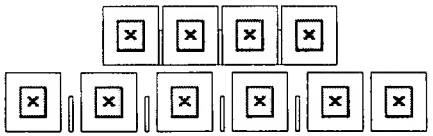

DESTINATION DATABASE

The **Follow The Rabbit!** team has built a unique database of travel destinations, and the list is growing every day. Our in-house **editors** and **analysts** are *fanatical* about uncovering unique and interesting destinations and delving into the many activities each destination offers. We are supported by an army of more than 165 freelance travel writers and researchers, themselves experts in their various cities and regions.

Each of our experts is responsible for crafting an extensive **Destination Report**, which they do by following our ridiculously exhaustive guidelines. In addition to capturing the atmosphere and flavor of each locale, our experts are also responsible for critiquing a list of over 80 activities and characteristics.

Each activity or characteristic is ranked, or "matched," on a scale of 0 to 5. (The rankings are also cross-checked by our in-house team.) Their rankings are entered into our extensive database, called a **Matching Engine**. This powerful system matches what you say you like with what we know about a given destination. We use this system (along with several other forms of **filtering technology**) to make you a perfect match.

Here is an explanation of the numbers and how we determine the ranking:

0 No rank. Zilch. Zip. Nada. The destination does not have the activity in question. Paris gets a "0" rank in snorkeling. Bonaire gets a "0" for skiing. It's just not there.

1 Barely ranked. You can find the activity in a couple of obscure sites in this destination. We don't recommend that you come to this destination for this activity, and even if you are at the destination already and really want to indulge in this activity, you'd be hard-pressed to find a location to indulge in this activity to an acceptable quality and quantity. For example,

Paris might receive a "1" in Hiking-there are some hiking trails on the outskirts of the city, but they're not very accessible and not nearly as good as the hiking opportunities in the French Alps.

2 Weak ranking. This activity is found at several locations scattered throughout this destination. We don't recommend that you come to this destination for this activity, but if you are at the destination and wish to indulge in this interest, it is possible to do so with some ease. Cyprus, for example gets a "2" for Zoos & Aquariums. There are a few options around, but nothing to look plan ahead for.

3 Solid ranking. This activity is found throughout the destination, and at a pretty good quality to boot. Nevertheless, there are other destinations, even within the same country, that might have this activity at a better quality or enjoy a better reputation for the activity. Paris might receive a "3" for Jogging during the spring, summer and fall, because there are numerous places to partake of this activity all over the city, and because the city has acquired some reputation for being a runner-friendly city. Other French cities, however, are more accessible and pleasant for joggers to run in, like Nice for example, especially in the winter.

4 Very high ranking. This activity is easily accessible and of a very high quality in this destination. We recommend that you come to this destination specifically for this activity, since the destination has acquired a very good reputation for having this activity in spades. But keep in mind, given all these accolades, the destination is not world-class in this activity; there are other places that are still better for this activity. Paris might receive a "4" for Language Learning. It's very easy to find a great French-language school for foreign students in Paris. However, if you really want to learn French, it might be better to head to a smaller town with a more prestigious foreign student department, like Grenoble or Tours.

5 Highest ranking possible. This destination is one of the premier places in the world in which to indulge in this activity. Nowhere else on earth can you find this activity in such abundance and quality as you can at this destination. Paris might receive a "5" for Museums. Some islands in the Caribbean would get "5s" for snorkeling and SCUBA diving.

In addition to assessing the overall quality of activities in each destination,

our ranking system is also completely dependent on time of the year. For example, Vail might get a "5" for downhill skiing between December and February, but would probably receive a "0" for downhill skiing in July. Our freelancers are responsible for investigating each activity over the course of the entire year, and varying their ranking accordingly.

Of course, our freelancers are only human. And even though our technology is top-notch, our in-house team is also only human. So there may be errors in our research, which may affect the ranking. There is also the possibility that you may simply disagree with our ranking. Great! We want to hear from you where you can tell us why you think our ranking is wrong.

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